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an allegory of the author's own life, and of his mental and moral development as already depicted in the *Apologia*.

Personally I must confess that allegory, at all events allegory as extensive as we find it, for instance, in Spenser's *Faerie Queen* and Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, not to mention the *Metamorphoses* as interpreted by Cocchia, does not appeal to me at all. To be frank I am distinctly bored by it. Allegory is a dangerous spirit to summon from the depths, and many a magician in the world of scholarship as well as in the world of literary art has received his mortal hurt thereby. Nor is the author the only one who is in danger. The weird and utterly impossible biographical tradition of Vergil which the old scholars derived from his *Eclogues* bears evidence to the fact that the pursuit of allegorical references in another man's work is a futile, not to say a dangerous, pastime. But allegory is largely a matter of period and in those strange days of the later Empire we may well suspect merely on general principles that Apuleius, just as Cocchia believes, was at one and the same time an allegorist and a novelist.

Here, however, I shall not pause to enumerate and discuss the arguments which Cocchia brings forward in support of his theory. I shall content myself merely with a hearty recommendation of the book to all who are interested in the great, the unique, literary masterpiece with which it is concerned.

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Vespucci Reprints, Texts and Studies. The Cyrus H. McCormick Publication Fund of the Princeton University Library. Princeton: Princeton University Press; London: Humphrey Milford, 1916. No. 2. The Soderini letter, 1504; facsimile. \$.75. No. 4. The Soderini letter, Critical translation with introduction by Professor G. T. Northup of Toronto University. \$1.25. No. 5. The *Mundus Novus* or Medici letter translated by Professor G. T. Northup. \$.75. No. 6. The *Paesi novamente ritrovati* 1598; facsimile. \$2.00. No. 7. The *Sensuyt le nouveau monde*, 1515; facsimile. \$2.00.

We all owe a debt of gratitude to the generosity of Mr. McCormick in purchasing these excessively rare documents and to the authorities of Princeton University for making them available to the world at large. The problem of Amerigo

Vespucci seems to be one of the most difficult in history. And surely we can never hope to solve such a problem until the documents with which it is associated are made available to as many intelligent investigators as possible.

The most important and the most interesting of the series, at least to the lay reader, is the Soderini letter. Professor Northup is to be congratulated for his excellent work upon this mysterious document. Strange to say he seems to be the only one so far to realize fully that the first and most important problem to be solved is purely philological. It is not until we understand the weird dialect of this letter and the reasons for its existence that we can come to any sane or certain conclusion regarding the much disputed matter of text.

From the nature of the case it is impossible to restore the actual words of the text. But the editor believes that at least the statements of the original letter may be restored, and this is what he has attempted to do in his translation. 'It takes into account', as he says, 'all three versions and is based upon them all, rather than on any one of them'.

In his notes, the translator confines himself rigidly to matters of text. I could wish that he had been less rigidly exclusive of other matters. There are a number of statements in the letter which he of all men is best fitted to illustrate. For instance, on p. 14 Vespucci says, 'There we perceived that they were roasting a certain beast which resembled a serpent except that it had no wings', etc. 'Un serpente, salvo che non teneva alia'. It seems to me that *serpente* here needs to be explained by something beside the literal translation of 'serpent'. Apparently Vespucci was thinking of the armadillo, a beast for which in his experience there was no parallel except the dragon, that fabulous creature which long before the Medea of Euripides was as a matter of course furnished with wings.

Vespucci makes a curious impression on the reader, at all events on this reader; he suggests a man who has seen so much and has had so many new impressions that he is quite unable to give anything like an adequate account of them. No doubt part of it is due to his own inability to express himself clearly and picturesquely. He was a man of action, not a man of words. He must have been a good navigator but his knowledge of the Classics was to say the least extremely vague, otherwise he never would have referred to Catullus' famous dedication of his poems to Cornelius Nepos as, "I will say to you as Pliny said to Maecenas: 'Once upon a time you were wont to take pleasure in my prattlings'."

KIRBY FLOWER SMITH.